

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TANANA 00138 021550Z

53

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 IGA-02 ACDA-05 AID-05 OMB-01

TRSE-00 EUR-12 /068 W

----- 010780

P 021514Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7925

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0138

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, XA

SUBJECT: REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINTS STUDY

REF: STATE 020621

1. SINCE MADAGASCAR IS A LARGE ISLAND SITUATED OVER 250 MILES FROM THE COAST OF AFRICA, IT IS NOT THREATENED BY DIRECT MILITARY MOVES OF OTHER COUNTRIES. IN FACT, THE ONLY REFERENCES TO SECURITY MADE BY MALAGASY POLITICAL LEADERS DURING THE PAST FOUR YEARS HAVE CONCERNED EITHER DIEGO GARCIA OR THE MINOR RESISTANCE THAT TOOK PLACE IN FEBRUARY 1975 WHEN THE THEN-CHIEF OF STATE RATSIMANDRAVA WAS ASSASSINATED AND SVE SECURITY FORCES MUTINIED.

2. DIEGO GARCIA IS NOT A VITAL ISSUE TO MADAGASCAR, BUT IT IS USEFUL RHETORIC FOR SOME MALAGASY LEADERS INCLUDING PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA WHO DESIRE TO DRAMATIZE MADAGASCAR'S IMPORTANCE IN THE WORLD. NATURALLY, RATSIRAKA AND THE OTHERS HAVE NEVER REFERRED TO SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN NOR THEIR BASE AT BERBERA.

3. MADAGASCAR'S WEAPONS INVENTORY IS PALTRY. DURING THE AFOREMENTIONED MUTINY LAST YEAR WHICH LASTED THREE DAYS WITH ONLY SPORADIC FIRING, THE MALAGASY ARMED FORCES APPARENTLY EXPENDED ALMOST ALL OF THEIR SMALL-ARMS AMMUNITION (WHICH HAVE SINCE BEEN REPLACED BY FRENCH AND BRITISH SOURCES). BETWEEN THE LACK OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TANANA 00138 021550Z

SERIOUS THREATS TO MALAGASY SECURITY, WHETHER INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL,

AND THE SERIOUS FINANCIAL SITUATION IN WHICH MADAGASCAR PRESENTLY FINDS ITSELF, THERE IS LITTLE INTEREST IN SPENDING MONEY ON MORE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS WHICH WOULD REQUIRE MUCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS A CONTINUAL STREAM OF SPARE PARTS AND COSTLY MAINTENANCE. GIVEN THE MALAGASY OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE ATTITUDE TOWARD SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN PRESENCE IN THEIR COUNTRY, EVEN SOVIET OR CHINESE, A BETTER ECONOMIC PICTURE HERE MIGHT REHLN EXPENDITURES FOR MODEST IMPROVEMENTS IN THEIR SMALL-ARMS INVENTORY AND NON-JET TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT. HOWEVER EVEN FREE WEAPONS WOULD EVENTUALLY ENTAIL A LARGER MILITARY FORCE COSTING MORE MONEY AS WELL AS EXPENSIVE MAINTENANCE AND SPARE PARTS FOR WHICH THEY EVENTUALLY WILL HAVE TO PAY.

4. POSSIBLE INCENTIVES. WITH THEIR FIXATION ABOUT DIEGO GARCIA, THE ONLY POLITICAL INCENTIVE WHICH WOULD ATTRACT THEM WOULD BE IF WE WERE TO AGREE TO DISMANTLEMENT OF OUR BASE THERE. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY NOT A QUID PRO QUO WORTH CONSIDERING. MOREOVER, GIVEN THE CURRENT OFFICIAL ATTITUDE, THEY WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO SUSPECT OUR MOTIVES AND NOT EVEN COME THROUGH WITH THE ASSURANCES WE WOULD BE SEEKING IN RETURN. IF, SOMEHOW, BOTH WE AND THE SOVIETS MUTUALLY AGREED TO DIMINISH OUR PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, THE MALAGASY MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SIGNING UP - IF ONLY TO APPEAR, AT LEAST IN THEIR OWN EYES, AS A PIVOTAL FORCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

5. OTHER POLITICAL AND SECURITY GUARANTEES WOULD HAVE ONLY A NEGATIVE MEANING HERE SINCE THEY WOULD INTERPRET SUCH A MOVE BY US AS AN ATTEMPT AT INTERFERENCE IN THEIR DOMESTIC AFFAIRS. AND, AS STATED ABOVE, THREATS TO SECURITY ARE VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTANT.

6. AS FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, NOW FAR DOWN THE PIKE AS FAR AS US- ADAGASCAR RELATIONS ARE CONCERNED, THIS COULD BE A DISTANT OBJECTIVE BUT WE WOULD PROBABLY BE BUYING THEM OFFI WITHOUT ANY REAL GAIN: THEY WOULD MAKE THE NECESSARY DECLARATIONS OF RESTRAINT IN ARMS PURCHASES, BUT THEY PROBABLY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN BUYING ANYWAY.

7. POSSIBLE NEW IDEA. MAURITIUS, THE SEYCHELLES AND THE COMOROS (WHATEVER THE POLITICAL OUTCOME OF THE LATTER MAY BE) ARE IN THE SAME BOAT AS MADAGASCAR. NONE (EXCEPT MAYOTTE IN THE COMOROS) CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TANANA 00138 021550Z

IS THREATENED BY INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL FORCES. NONE APPEARS TO BE EXPANDING ITS ARSENAL. YET, IN VIEW OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS IN THE "PEACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN" THEME, COULD NOT MADAGASCAR AND THE OTHER THREE NOW-INDEPENDENT ENTITIES BE BROUGHT INTO SOME SORT OF PACT TO RESTRICT, QUANTITATIVELY AND/OR QUALITATIVELY, ARMS PURCHASES? MADAGASCAR, THE LARGEST OF THE FOUR, MIGHT WANT TO TAKE THE LEAD AS A PAPER RESPONSE TO THE BIG POWERS' INDIAN OCEAN "BUILD-UP", SO LONG AS WE DO NOT

APPEAR TO BE PUTTING THEM UP TO IT.

8. AN OFF-SHOOT OF SUCH AN AGREEMENT MIGHT BE THAT IT COULD PERMIT US, ALONG WITH THE FOUR PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT, TO CALL PUBLICLY ON THE SOVIETS TO REDUCE THEIR INDIAN OCEAN PRESENCE WITH AN OFFER TO REDUCE OUR OWN PRESENCE. WE SHOULD NOT BE SO OPTIMISTIC TO EXPECT THE MALAGASY TO JOIN WITH US AT THE OUTSET IN THIS COURSE OF ACTION SINCE THEY DO NOT EVEN PRIVATELY ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOVIET PRESUNCE. HOWEVER, SUCH A MOVE BY US, WHETHER WITHIN THE UN OR NOT, MIGHT CONCEIVABLY FORCE THE MALAGASY TO SOFTEN UP ON DIEGO GARCIA.SHEINBAUM

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, CONVENTIONAL WARFARE, STUDIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TANANA00138
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760038-1074
From: TANANARIVE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760290/aaaadbld.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 20621
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINTS STUDY
TAGS: MILI, PFOR, XA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006